THE OBSERVER.

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SUNDAY MORNING, APRIL 23, 1809.

MORALIST. No. 3.

THE PREACHER.

All go into one place, all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.
Eccl. chap. iv. ver. 20.

This sentence, and those of a similar import, which we find scattered throughout the holy writings, have always appeared to my mind to contain the fundamental principles of pure morality. This great truth of man's *natural equality* forms the great fountain from which every stream of virtue flows; and it is only when prosperity has caused us to forget it, that we begin to yield to the allurements of vice.

This is the motto, written in characters of gold over the portal of the great temple of Christian virtue. This is the parent of Christian humility, and consequently of all the Christian virtues.

Avarice and ambition both proceed from certain original propensities implanted in the breast by our Creator; these propensities wisely controlled are the parents of virtue; but when folly marks their path, they travel to extremes and become the sturdy parents of vice. The avaricious man tramples on every moral obligation, and violates, without remorse, every social tie: his great object is to him the only good. The ambitious man, by the same impulse, wades through an ocean of blood---a sea of human misery, and builds his greatness on the ruins of nations. Who can calculate the enormities that are generated by these master passions? Who can trace their dark and desolating course? What is the great end and aim of both?---*personal distinction.* If "all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again," what value is there in that personal distinction which owns avarice and ambition for its parents? He who leans upon this broken reed forgets his ultimate destiny, forgets that he brought not this distinction into the world with him, and that he certainly cannot carry it with him when he takes his final departure. These *distinctions*, are of this world:---the wise man will lay up his treasure in heaven.

Whatever may be the situation which we are called upon to fulfil, it becomes us to conduct ourselves with humility. In this life every thing but genius and virtue is adventitious, and without value.

No. 10.

If we may be allowed for a moment to contemplate the Deity, according to the heathen mythology, as amusing himself with the follies and inconsistencies of men, nothing certainly can more powerfully excite his smiles than the picture daily presented to our view, of the respect extorted by wealth and power. A favourite author has enabled us to judge and partake of these sensations by an exquisite satire. He has placed the world and all its endless vanity of concerns before our eyes in the picture of a mole hill. He has raised us to the elevation of gods;---and in smiling at the pomp assumed and granted by the little community to the fabled ant, whose worldly wealth exceeded his neighbour's by one grain of wheat; and at the anxiety displayed by the emmet to secure his little badge of power. We have for the moment entertained the true estimate of the value of our prominent pursuits. In the eye of an Almighty Being, all our worldly pomp, which creates to us so much pain and travail, appears equally ridiculous.

Power and wealth are only so far valuable, as they enable us the more effectually to discharge the great duties imposed upon us. He who labours to attain them from other motives, and for other purposes, forms a false estimate of their value.

Even Genius, when correctly considered, affords no real ground of pride to its possessor. It is the gift of Heaven, and he to whom it has been granted has a more serious and important duty to discharge than the man from whom this divine ray has been withheld: "to whom much has been given from him much will be required." Inasmuch therefore as the man of genius will be judged hereafter by a severe rule, inasmuch does an increased humility become him.

When such a man allows himself to be led astray by a strong affection for temporary distinctions, he forgets the moral of the text, and errs against the great principles of the Christian system.

How many of the wisest of the sons of men act through life as if they disbelieved the solemn truth of man's equality. They feel the warm rays of genius glowing in their bosoms, they are conscious of the immense comparative superiority of elevation to which the powers of their mind have raised them, and they indulge a fanciful expectation that this marked distinction will accompany them through the endless ages of eternity. But in the eye of God all human wisdom is foolishness, and the advances which the strongest powers of man can here make towards perfection, are, in his view, infinitely small.

If a wise man therefore cannot wisely indulge the vanity of genius, how much less wise is it for the man of wealth to indulge the vanity of riches. How bold and striking is the contrast. How much more honourable. How much more natural is it for the man of genius to plume himself on his fancied pre-eminence, than for the man whose sole merit is his wealth. The spirit of the one soars on the wings of the morning, and ranges through the boundless infinity of space. He moves a god amidst the ideal worlds of his own creative fancy. The spirit of the other rests upon the dross in which his happiness is centred. "The way of the one is the way of an eagle in the air, the other is the way of a serpent upon a rock."

These sentiments of superiority, however, are the offspring of that adulation which the world lavishly bestows on genius and wealth. Accustomed to be treated by their fellow creatures as superior beings, the rich man glories in his riches, and the man of genius rejoices in the honours of the world; and thus they both forget that they are "of the dust, and must return to dust again." Well therefore might the truly wise man exclaim---"Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."

A.

EARLY TASTE FOR READING.

The first indications of genius often show themselves at a very early period. A sagacious observer of the varieties of intellect, will frequently be able to pronounce, with some confidence, upon a child of tender years, that he exhibits marks of future eminence, either in eloquence, invention, or judgment.

The talents of the mind, like the herbs of the ground, seem to distribute themselves at random. The winds disperse from one spot to another the invisible germs ;---they take root, in many cases, without a planter, and grow up without care or observation.

It would be truly worthy of regret, if chance, so to speak, would do that, which all the sagacity of man was unable to effect, if the distribution of the noblest ornament of our nature, could be subjected to no rules, and reduced to no system.

He that would extend in this respect the province of education, must proceed like the improvers of other science, by experiment and observation. He must watch the progress of the dawning mind, and discover what it is that gives it its first determination.

The sower of seed cannot foretel which seed shall fall useless to the ground, destined to wither and to perish, and which shall take root, and display the most exuberant fertility. As among the seeds of the earth, so among the perceptions of the human mind, some are reserved, as it were, for instant and entire oblivion ; and some, undying and immortal, assume an importance never to be superseded. For the first we ought not to torment ourselves with an irrational anxiety, the last cannot obtain from us an attention superior to their worth.

Books are the depository of every thing that is most honourable to men. Literature, taken in all its bearings, forms the grand line of demarcation between the human and the animal kingdoms. He that loves reading has every thing within his reach : he has but to desire, to judge, and to perform.

The chief point of difference between the man of talent, and the man without, consists in the different ways in which their minds are employed during the same interval. Let us suppose they are obliged to walk from the Park to the Bowling-green ; the dull man goes straight forward, he has so many furlongs to travel. If he meet any acquaintances, he enquires respecting their health and family ;---he glances perhaps at the shops as he passes ;---he admires the fashion of a buckle, or the metal of a tea-urn. If he experience any flights of fancy, they are of short extent,---like the forest bird, whose wings are clipped, and condemned to pass the rest of his life in a farm-yard. On the other hand, the man of talent gives full scope to his imagination :---he laughs and cries, unindebted to the suggestions of surrounding objects, his whole soul is employed.---He enters into nice calculations ;---he digests sagacious reasonings.---In imagination he declaims or describes,---impressed with the deepest sympathy, or elevated to the loftiest rapture. He makes a thousand new and admirable combinations. He passes through a thousand imaginary scenes,---tries his courage and ingenuity, and thus becomes gradually prepared to meet almost any of the many-coloured events of human life. He consults, by the aid of memory, the books he has read, and projects others for the future instruction and delight of mankind. If he observe the passengers, he reads their countenances, conjectures their past history, and forms a superficial notion of their wisdom or folly---their virtues or vices---their satisfaction or misery. If he observe the scenes that occur it is with the eye of a connoisseur or an artist. Eve-

ry thing is capable of suggesting to him a volume of reflections. Thus the time of both those persons has been employed---they have reached the Bowling-green :---In almost every other respect their walk has been dissimilar.

What is it that tends to generate these opposite habits of mind?

Probably nothing has contributed more than an early taste for reading. Books gratify and excite our curiosity in innumerable ways. They force us to reflect ;---they hurry us from point to point ;---they present direct ideas of various kinds, and they suggest indirect ones. In a well written book we are presented with the maturest reflection, on the happiest flights of a mind of uncommon excellence. It is impossible that we can be much accustomed to such companions, without attaining some resemblance of them. When I read the works of Milton, I become Milton. When I read the works of Thompson, I become Thompson. I find myself a sort of intellectual cameleon, assuming the colour of the substance on which I rest. He who revels in a well chosen library, has innumerable dishes, and all of admirable flavour. His taste is rendered so acute, as easily to distinguish the nicest shades of difference. His mind becomes ductile, susceptible to every impression, and gaining new refinements from them all. His varieties of thinking baffle calculation, and his powers, whether of reason or fancy, become eminently vigorous. J. L. B.

(To be continued.)

THE DEATH OF A SINNER.

Continued from No. 9.

- - - - - - You will no longer find any thing real in your life, but what you shall have done for God ; nothing praiseworthy, but works of faith and of piety; nothing great but what will merit eternity ; and a single drop of cold water in the name of Jesus Christ, a single tear shed in his presence, and the slightest mortification suffered for his sake, will all appear more precious, more estimable to you than all the wonders which the world admires, and which shall perish with it.

Not that the dying sinner finds only cares and anxieties thrown away in his past life, he finds the remembrance likewise of his pleasures ; but this very remembrance depresses and overwhelms him. Pleasures which have existed only for a moment : He now perceives that he has sacrificed his soul and his eternal welfare, to a fugitive moment of passion and voluptuousness. Alas ! life had appeared too long to him, to be entirely consecrated to God : He was afraid to adopt too early the side of virtue, lest he should be unable to support its duration, its weariness, and its consequences. He looked forward to the years he had still to run, as to an immense space, through which he must travel under the weight of the Cross, and separated from the world, in the practice of Christian works : This idea alone had always suspended his good intentions ; and in order to return to God, he waited the last stage of life, as the one in which perseverance is most certain. What a surprise in this last hour, to find, that what had to him appeared so long, has in reality been but an instant ; that his infancy and old age so nearly touch each other, that they only form, as I may say, one day ; and that, from his mother's breast, he has made but one step towards the grave. Nor is this the bitterest pang which he experiences in the remembrance of his pleasures : they have vanished like a dream ; but he, who formerly claimed an honour to himself from their gratification, is now covered with confu-

sion and shame at their recollection : So many shameful excesses ; such weakness and debauchery : He who piqued himself upon reason, elevation of mind, and hautiness towards man ; O my God ! he then finds himself the weakest the most despicable of sinners ! Apparently, perhaps, a life of prudence, yet sunk in all the infamy of the senses, and the puerility of the passions ! A life of glory in the eyes of men ; but in the sight of God the most shameful, the most deserving of contempt and disgrace ! A life, which success, perhaps, had continually accompanied ; yet nevertheless, in private the most absurd, the most trifling, the most destitute of reflection and wisdom !

Pleasures, in a word, which have been the scource of all his chagrins ; which have empoisoned every enjoyment of life : which have changed his happiest days into days of madness and lamentation.

Pleasures, for which he has ever paid dear ; and of which he has never experienced but the anxieties and the bitterness : such are the foundations of this frivolous happiness. His passions alone have rendered life miserable to him ; and the only moments of tranquillity he has enjoyed, in the whole course of his life, are those in which his heart has been sheltered from their influence. The days of my pleasures are fled, says then the sinner to himself, but in a disposition of mind very different from that of Job : Those days which have occasioned all the sorrows of my life ; by which my rest has been broken and the calm stillness of the night changed into the blackest thoughts and uneasinesses. Yet nevertheless, Great God ! Thou wilt still punish the sorrows and distresses of my unfortunate life ! All the bitterness of my passions is marked against me in the book of thy wrath.

Behold what the expiring sinner experiences in the remembrance of the past crimes, which shall endure for ever ; the weaknesses of childhood ; the dissipations of youth ; the passions and the disorders of a more advanced period ; what do I know, perhaps even the shameful excesses of a licentious old age. Ah ! my brethren, whilst in health, we perceive only the surface of our conscience : We recall only a vague and confused remembrance of our life : We see only the passions which actually enchain us ; a complete life, spent in the habits of iniquity, appears to us only a single crime. But on the bed of death, the darkness spread over the conscience of the sinner is dissipated. The more he searches into his heart, the more does he discover new stains ; the deeper he enters into that abyss, the more do new monsters of horror present themselves to his sight. He is lost in the chaos, and knows not how to proceed. To enlighten it, an entire new life would be necessary : Alas ! and time flies ; scarcely do a few moments now remain to him, and he must precipitate a confession, for which the greatest leisure would hardly suffice, and which can precede but an instant the awful judgment of the justice of God. Alas ! we often complain, during life, of a treacherous memory ; that we forget every thing ; that the minister of God is under the necessity of remedying our inattention, and of assisting us to know and to judge of ourselves. But in that last moment, the expiring sinner shall require no assistance to recall the remembrance of his crimes : The justice of God, which had delivered him up, during health to all the profundity of his darkness, will then enlighten him in his wrath.

Every thing around his bed of death awakens the remembrance of some new crime ; servants, whom he has scandalized by his example ; children, whom he has neglected ; a wife, whom he has rendered miserable by unlawful attachment ; ministers of the church, whom he

has despised: riches, which he has abused; the luxury which surrounds, him, for which the poor and his creditors have suffered; the pride and magnificence of his edifices, which have been reared up upon the inheritance of the widow and the orphan, or perhaps by the public calamity: every thing, in a word, the heavens and the earth, says Job, shall reveal his iniquity, and rise up against him; shall recall to him the frightful history of his passions, and of his crimes.

Thus, the recollection of the past forms one of the most dreadful situations of the expiring sinner; because in it he finds nothing but labours lost; pleasures which have been dissipated the moment almost of their existence; and crimes which shall endure for ever.

CHRISTIANITY.

The late pious and eloquent bishop Horne, in an admirable discourse on the Resurrection, introduces the following animated passage, from bishop Taylor's *Moral demonstration of the truth of Christianity:* On this work the learned prelate bestows this unequivocal and mental praise. "No tract ever came from the pen of man, better calculated to dispel those doubts and difficulties which may arise in the mind of a believer, or to work conviction and conversion in that of the unbeliever, who can bring himself to give it a fair and attentive perusal."

'That a religion which taught men to be meek and humble, disposed to receive injuries, but not to do any; a religion which gave countenance to the poor and lowly, at a time when riches were adored, and ambition and pleasure had possessed the hearts of all mankind; that such a religion, in such an age, by the sermons and conduct of fishermen, men of mean breeding and illiberal arts, should so speedily triumph over the philosophy of the world, and the arguments of the subtle, and the discourses of the eloquent, the power of princes, and the interests of states, the inclinations of nature, and the blindness of zeal, the force of custom, and the solicitation of passion, the pleasures of sin, and the busy arts of the great enemy of mankind; that is, against wit and power, superstition and wilfulness, fame and money, nature and empire, which are all the causes in this world that can make a thing impossible; this, this is to be ascribed to the power of God, and is the greatest demonstration of the Resurrection of Jesus. Every thing was an argument for it, and improved it; no objection could hinder it, no enemies destroy it; whatsoever was for it made the religion to increase; whatsoever was against made it to increase. If Christians had peace, they went abroad and brought in converts; if they had persecution, the converts came in to them. In prosperity they allured and enticed the world by the beauty of holiness; in affliction and trouble they amazed all men with the splendour of their innocence, and the glories of their patience. Quickly, therefore, it was, that the world became disciplined to the glorious Nazarine, and men could no longer doubt of the Resurrection of Jesus, when it became demonstrated by the certainty of those who saw it, and the courage of those who died for it, and the multitude of those who believed it, who by their sermons and their actions, by their public offices and discourses, by festivals and sacraments, by arguments of sense and experience, by reason and religion, by persuading rational men, and establishing believing Christians, by their living in the obedience, and dying for the testimony of Jesus, have greatly advanced his kingdom, and his power, and his glory, into which he entered, upon his Resurrection from the dead.

"If, therefore, concludes bishop Horne, the Patriarchs, the Law, and the Prophets; if Heaven and Earth; if angels from above, and the dead from beneath; If the appearances of Christ himself on earth and from Heaven; if the spirit of Truth, with all his gifts and Graces; if the miracles of the Apostles, the lives of the Saints, the sufferings of Confessors, and the death of Martyrs; if the conversion of the world to the Faith of a crucified Saviour, without power, wealth or learning: if the Church with the antiquity, universality, and consent of her institutions and services for above seventeen centuries, from the day on which Christ was first seen by the eleven after his Resurrection, to this hour; and lastly, if the objections of the adversary, establishing the truth which they were intended to subvert; that is to say, in one word, if all the evidence which God can give, or man receive, be sufficient to prove a matter of fact, then may we evermore rejoice, and evermore let us therefore rejoice in all the consequences of this glorious truth 'the Lord is risen indeed!"'

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

By the President of the United States of America.

A PROCLAMATION.

Whereas it is provided by the 11th section of the act of Congress entitled, "An act to interdict the commercial intercourse between the U. states and G. Britain and France, and their dependencies; and for other purposes,"---and that "in case either France or G. Britain shall so revoke or modify their edicts as that they shall cease to violate the neutral commerce of the U. S." the President is authorised to declare the same by proclamation, after which the trade suspended by the said act and by an act laying an Embargo, on all ships and vessels in the ports and harbours of the United States and the several acts supplementary thereto may be renewed with the nation so doing. And whereas the Honourable David Montague Erskine, his Britannic Majesty's Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary, has by the order and in the name of his sovereign declared to this government that the British orders in council of January and November 1807, will be withdrawn as respects the U. S. on or before the 10th day of June next. Now therefore I, James Madison, President of the United States, do hereby proclaim that the orders in council aforesaid will be withdrawn on or before the 10th day of June next: after which day, the trade of the United States with Great Britain, as suspended by the act of Congress above mentioned, and an act laying an embargo on all ships and vessels in the ports and harbours of the United States and the several acts supplementary thereto, may be renewed.

Given under my hand and seal of the United States at Washington, the nineteenth day of April, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and nine, and of the independence of the United States, the thirty-third.

SIGNED, JAMES MADISON, President.
ROBERT SMITH, Secretary of State.

Extracted from London papers, brought by the brig Cumberland, Capt. Meserve, in 44 days from Liverpool.

LONDON, March 4.

The opinion that a war will immediately take place between France and Austria, appears to be prevalent in almost every part of the Continent. The return of Bonaparte from Spain, and his journey to

Germany, the movement of the French troops, and finally the order which he has given to the Princes belonging to the confederation of the Rhine, are circumstances which appear almost decisive upon the subject. Bonaparte has viewed with considerable uneasiness the military preparations which Austria has been for some time making, and will probably precipitate the contest, with a view of overwhelming her before her arrangements are completed.

Our communication with Sweden and the Baltic is at length opened, and this morning 11 of the 16 Gottenburgh mails due, arrived. On the 22 Dec. 5 British and 3 Swedish ships of war, with a convoy of 12 merchant vessels, sailed for England, part of which were lost by the ice, and part captured by the Danes---some of the prizes were also lost in the same way.

The Stockholm Gazette, of Feb. 16th, states, that intelligence had been received from Schwerin, that Gen. Devoust had given notice to the French Consul in Rostock, that the embargo laid on 51 merchantmen lying in the port, is raised.

Dutch Papers arrived this morning to the 28th ult. They contain very important intelligence—War between Austria and France is openly spoken of, and an article in the Leyden Paper of the 27th, informs us of the measures, which have been adopted by the Cabinet of Vienna; measures which can only have been adopted in the contemplation of an immediate war.

Peace has certainly been concluded between Turkey and Great Britain—It was signed by the Turkish Minister, Hakki Effendi, and Mr. Adair. A fresh insurrection had broken out at Constantinople, and the Peace with England is said in an article from Vienna to have been the immediate consequence of it. The Russian generals, as soon they were informed of the event, broke off all negociation with the Turks.

Peace with Turkey was signed on the 5th of January.

An article from Arrogan, dated the 11th of February, mentions that there are 40,000 men in arms defending Saragossa; that Junot is beseiging it: that the works and trenches are pushed on to the gates of the town, and a bombardment kept up without intermission. The enemy hope to force the place to surrender by famine more than by force of arms.

MARRIED.

By the rev. Mr. Miller, Mr. James Parks, of this city, grocer, to Miss Alethia Marseilles, of Bergen, New-Jersey.

By the rev. Mr. Hobart, James Fleming, esq. to Miss Maria Matilda Ludlow.

On the 15th inst. by the rev. Mr. Hobart, Jacob Livingston, esq. to Miss Catharine A. De Peyster.

On the 9th inst. by the rev. Mr Lyell, Mr. William Ashley, to Mrs. Mary Devoe.

At White-Plains, on Thursday, the 13th inst. by the rev. Mr. Crawford, Mr. Andrew L. Halstead, of this city, merchant, to Miss Lavinia Horton, of the former place.

On Wednesday evening, by the rev. Mr. Parkinson, Mr. Salem Wines, to Miss Hannah Magee.

On Friday evening, 15th inst. by the rev. Mr. Hamilton, Mr. D. Bryson, to Miss Margaret Hoffman.

Same evening, by the rev. Mr. Miller, Mr. John Conrey, to Miss Prudence Griffen.

BILL OF MORTALITY,

from the 8th to the 15th April, 1809.

	Years.		Years.
Patrick Shay.	54	Jemimah Smith,	64
N. Gilledet,	81	John O'Hara,	19
Ann Mallaby,	59	John Coleman,	60
Michael Ward,	30	Wm Gallaghan,	45
Haid Garrien,	52	Elizabeth Scold,	79
Leah Dennis,	60	Mary Crolius,	73
Henry Swartwout,	28	Mrs. Fowler,	34
Richard Carnes,	22	Jonathan Hair,	30
Cæsar Javins,	52	Robt Thompson,	7
F. Gaines,	5	Sarah Evans,	12
Jean Bennie,	5	Charles Farrel,	6
Benjamin Franklin,	11	John Beattie,	5
Charlotte Johnson	2	J. Adams's child,	3 m.
Margaret Sherry,	4 m.	J. B. Brower's ch.	1 m.
Mr. Ray's child,	27 d.		

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